

## CLINICAL EMS AT THE RVC

The clinical curriculum for RVC students follows the following structure:

<b>Clinical Year 1 (3rd year 3 terms - September to July)</b>	<b>Modules:</b> Principles of Clinical Science, Professional Studies, Alimentary, Farm Population Medicine & Veterinary Public Health, Reproduction, Cardiovascular, Respiratory & Renal <b>Followed by: Extramural Studies around the Easter break</b> Followed by Modules: Principles of Clinical Science, Neurology and Ophthalmology, Locomotor, Lymphoreticular and Haemopoietic <b>followed by: Extramural Studies through the summer</b>
<b>Clinical Year 2 (4th year – September-January)</b>	Modules: Principles of Clinical Science, Skin, Endocrinology, Veterinary Public Health Followed by: Pre-Clinical Rotation Taught Tracking
<b>Clinical Years 2 → 3 (4<sup>th</sup> year from February → 5<sup>th</sup> year)</b>	Clinical Rotations – all disciplines <b>(Extramural studies take place throughout this rotational year)</b> Followed by: Post-Clinical Taught Tracking, Professional Studies week

The RVC encourages their students to plan their Clinical EMS programme with their personal learning needs in mind, and comprehensive guidelines are provided to help them to get the most out of their time on placement. Advice can be sought from their clinical tutor, the staff at Academic Registry, their guidelines, and their Day One Skills booklet. The experiences gained while on placement should best reflect their own learning needs as they progress towards their Day One Competences as described by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) and set out in the Royal Veterinary College's (RVC's) Day One Skills booklet and database. A series of tutorials are run prior to the first EMS period (Easter in 3<sup>rd</sup> year) and afterwards to help prepare students for EMS placements and to encourage them to reflect on their experiences. Voluntary *Lunch and Learn* sessions are also run through 3<sup>rd</sup> term of 3<sup>rd</sup> year and 1<sup>st</sup> tem of 4<sup>th</sup> year to encourage reflection on specific EMS experience to reinforce learning, particularly therapeutics.

Veterinary placements should expect all students to arrive on day 1 with some idea of what type of work the practice does, and to have a reasonable list of objectives for their time spent at that placement. The RVC expects that their students will have a common sense approach to setting out this list of objectives, bearing in mind the stage of the course they have reached and their own level of competence.

Using the RVC's Day One Skills booklet or database as a guide, and with the help of their tutor, students should agree in advance of each placement a reasonable list of learning objectives for that placement. They are advised that they may find it helpful to include these in an introductory letter sent to the placement supervisor that is timed to arrive a week or so before the placement begins. This introductory letter could also include a brief and relevant outline of their practical experience so far, as well as an embedded recent photograph of themselves, and should be no more than a single side of A4.

Students are advised that the learning objectives agreed with their tutor should always be considered the starting point of the negotiations between themselves and the placement. Upon arrival, they should clarify whether their list is a reasonable one for that placement, and if adjustments are required, these should be done in a sensible and professional manner. Students are not in a position to demand opportunities, but instead must be prepared to work to get the most out of any opportunities that are available. All students should see that a friendly, helpful and open approach is usually rewarded by greater opportunities.

### **Overview of constructing an EMS programme**

Students are advised that 26 weeks of Clinical EMS must be completed or they will be precluded from graduating (RCVS rules). 10 weeks of EMS are completed before clinical rotations start in 2nd term of 4<sup>th</sup> year (February), 16 weeks during clinical rotation. The first six or so weeks of Clinical EMS out on placement should be viewed as a preparatory time, giving them an opportunity to observe how practices work. It is accepted by all that their clinical skills are still undeveloped in Year 3 so the amount of hands-on clinical work that is reasonable to undertake during these early EMS placements is limited. This should not be seen as a source of frustration, but instead this time should be used to familiarise themselves with how practices work, and give them a chance to develop a good working relationship with a practice so that they could return several times through the rest of their clinical course (i.e. the practice could become their "base practice").

During the first 10 weeks of clinical EMS RVC students need to spend at least 6 weeks in the UK at three different multi-vet first opinion practices. Ideally this 6 weeks should be 3 x 2 week blocks. Students are encouraged to try and return to one of these first opinion placements throughout the remainder of their programme.

The remaining 20 weeks of their EMS should be used to develop practical experiences across a range of different animal species. They should look to gain at least the equivalent of two weeks practical experience in a busy small animal practice, the equivalent of two weeks practical experience in a busy equine practice, and the equivalent of two weeks practical experience in a busy large animal practice. The requirement to spend time in different types of practices is important to support their learning and prepare for Finals as they are required by the RCVS to graduate as a "species omniscient" veterinarian regardless of their personal species preferences or future career plans.

The remaining EMS experience should be planned in consultation with their clinical tutor. This time should be used sensibly to develop knowledge and experience that best sets them up for Finals and a professional life beyond graduation. Although the learning experiences

can be valuable, placements at single-vet practices should be the exception as they may provide limited experiences. RVC students are also encouraged to attend placements for at least two weeks as the learning opportunities can be limited with shorter placements. In general one week placements are not permitted in 3<sup>rd</sup> year

Placement supervisors are encouraged to provide honest and constructive verbal and written feedback on a student's performance so that future placements can be tailored to better fulfil their educational requirements. All feedback should be considered a valuable observation from someone in the practice environment, and the RVC expects that any comments should be accepted by our students in a mature and professional way. Feedback forms are sent to the student's tutor who will discuss the feedback with the student. Feedback is used to form the basis for planning future placements.

## **INSURANCE FOR RVC STUDENTS ON CLINICAL ATTACHMENTS**

### **Employers and Public Liability (UK only)**

Students undertaking activities as part of their RVC degree programmes who attend placements or work experience outside of RVC premises at veterinary practices, research centres, or other animal establishments etc. will be under the supervision of the host institutions. The host institution should hold Employers and Public Liability insurance. Both types of insurance normally include persons under work experience within the definition of employees.

### **RVC Public Liability**

The college's Public Liability policy will provide cover for legal liability for any claims made against the college as a result of students causing any injury or damage to a third party/ third party property (which includes animals) whilst on college business and under the direction of the RVC or its employees at any veterinary practices, research centres, abattoirs, or other animal establishments etc. However, it is rarely the case that EMS placements will occur under the direction of an RVC employee (except for those within the RVC's own practices) therefore this policy does not usually cover EMS placements.

### **Other Covers**

Students are responsible for obtaining their own insurance against personal accident and/or illness as well as insurance to cover the loss or damage to their personal effects. Student members of BVA receive free personal accident, liability and a hospital cash package. These benefits are only applicable while directly involved in university tutorial activities or associated work experience.

Students attending placements overseas should obtain appropriate travel and health insurance. The type of insurance obtained will depend on the passport the student holds and the location of the placement. Professional indemnity cover should be provided by the placement provider. RVC students are eligible for Student American Veterinary Medical

Association (SAVMA) membership and as SAVMA members they can purchase liability cover to see practice with USA vets who are AVMA PLIT policy holders.